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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

MONDAY, MAY 23, 2005

THIS REPORT PRESENTS THE TURKISH PRESS SUMMARY UNDER THREE
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HEADLINES

MASS APPEAL

`Double' Protest Against First Lady Bush in Jerusalem -
Hurriyet
`Cold Shower' for Laura Bush in Jerusalem - Milliyet
Jafari: Coalition Withdrawal Depends on Iraq Security -
Hurriyet 5/22
Turkey to Train Iraqi Policemen - Sabah 5/22
Erdogan to "Le Figaro": Turkey Wants to be Loyal EU Partner
- Sabah 5/22
Shiite-Sunni Alliance in Iraq - Aksam
Gaza Withdrawal in August - Aksam
Huntington: Turkey Has Leadership Position in Islamic World
- Hurriyet 5/22

OPINION MAKERS

Repairing Relations With Iraq - Cumhuriyet
Turkish Day Euphoria in US - Zaman
Shiites, Sunnis Call for Unity of Iraq - Yeni Safak
7,000 Indonesians Protest Alleged Koran Abuse - Radikal
US Pressures Karimov - Yeni Safak
Andijon Heals Wounds, Tension High in Karasu - Zaman
Early Polls Looming in Germany - Zaman
Rice Highlights Damascus' Support for Iraqi Resisters - Yeni
Safak 5/22
Syrian Government Hunts for Islamists - Yeni Safak
Amr Moussa: Democracy Only Way for Arab Nations - Cumhuriyet
Karzai Condemns US Torture, Killing of 2 Afghans - Zaman
5/22
Saudi Women Have No Rights - Cumhuriyet
BBC Employees on Strike - Cumhuriyet

BRIEFING

Iraq's PM Jafari Visits Turkey: Iraqi Prime Minister
Ibrahim al-Jafari assured Ankara during his state visit to
Turkey that the PKK in northern Iraq would not be allowed to
attack Turkey. Jafari said after meeting PM Tayyip Erdogan
on Friday that those countries that have supported Iraq
`would never be forgotten.' At a larger bilateral meeting
chaired by Jafari, the Turks handed the Iraqi side a list of
150 PKK members, including Osman Ocalan, for arrest and
extradition. On Kirkuk, Jafari said the oil-rich northern
Iraqi city's diverse demographic makeup should be preserved.
Erdogan said that no ethnic group should be allowed to
dominate Kirkuk, and stressed that `appropriate' grounds
should be formed for a constitution that will ensure the
broadest possible participation. Jafari responded
positively to Ankara's suggestion for opening a second
border crossing in Ovakoy due to heavy traffic through the
Habur border gate. A trilateral meeting between Turkey,
Iraq, and the US is to be held in Turkey in July to discuss
the trucker security issue. It was agreed that Turkey will
continue training Iraqi security forces under a NATO
program, and will carry out diplomatic training for Iraqi
diplomats. The two sides also agreed to open consulates in
Mosul and Istanbul, and to simplify visa procedures for
travel between the two countries. The Iraqi Prime Minister
was also received by parliamentary speaker Bulent Arinc, who
pledged Turkey's help in drafting the Iraqi constitution.
On Friday evening, Jafari visited 14 Iraqis receiving
medical treatment in an Ankara hospital. The Iraqis had
been wounded in a bomb attack against the Kurdistan
Democratic Party (KDP) office in Erbil May 4. Jafari said
before departing from Ankara on Saturday that a pullback of
coalition forces from Iraq would only take place after
Iraq's security forces are fully in place and prepared to
handle the security threat.

Sezer, Erdogan Issue Messages on Turkey-US Ties: Turkish
President Ahmet Necdet Sezer issued a message Saturday
highlighting the `special' relationship between Turkey and

the United States on the occasion of the 24th annual Turkish parade held in New York. 'We want to further strengthen cooperation with the US, and we are happy that the US shares the same desire,' Sezer said. He praised the activities held in the US that are aimed at improving bilateral ties and balancing 'the negative effects of anti-Turkey lobbies' there. Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan said that Turkey's 'friend and ally, the United States' is 'our main partner' in dealing with regional and global issues. 'Our relations with the United States are different from our relations with any other country,' Erdogan said. He added that Turkey is the only secular and democratic country in the region that believes in the free market economy. 'We support our nationals as they acquire US citizenship and become involved in US political life,' the Turkish prime minister emphasized.

First Lady on Middle East Tour: First Lady Laura Bush arrived from Jordan to Israel on the last leg of her tour of the Middle East in an effort to support democracy and women's rights, Turkish papers reported on Monday. Mrs. Bush met with Israeli President Moshe Katzav and his wife in Jerusalem, and visited holy places in the city. The First Lady also visited the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem, and traveled to Jericho in the West Bank to meet with Palestinian officials. She later flew to Egypt. On the first stop of her tour in Jordan, Laura Bush told the World Economic Forum that women should be granted the rights to free speech, worship and vote, and she welcomed Kuwait's new law granting women the right to vote as a 'happy' development. Papers also cite international wire reports that 'fanatical' Jews protested against the First Lady to urge the release of Jonathan Pollard, who was sentenced to life in prison for spying for Israel. A group of Muslims also yelled at Mrs. Bush over the alleged desecration of the Koran in Guantanamo Bay prison.

Emine Erdogan Joins International Women's Forum in Damascus: Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan's wife Emine told the International Businesswomen Forum in Damascus that women from around the world should take more active roles in politics, culture, arts and sports, Monday's papers report. 'Truth and justice should be universalized, not terror,' Mrs. Erdogan said. She claimed that women could find solutions to problems around the world if they are allowed to do so. Papers note that Mrs. Erdogan returned to Ankara from Damascus last night on President Assad's official airplane.

Anti-US Protest in Istanbul: A rally was held in Istanbul to protest the 'unrestricted' US access to Incirlik Airbase, weekend papers report. The small group of demonstrators demanded the closure of Incirlik Airbase and a US pullout from the Middle East. They also blamed the ruling AK Party government for becoming a partner in the US 'occupation and savagery' in the region.

Syria Imprisons PKK Members: A Syrian court ordered the imprisonment of three alleged members of the outlawed PKK for 30 months for carrying out separatist activities, Sunday papers report. Reports suggest that the convictions are further evidence of the thaw in Turkish-Syrian relations and the positive tone generated by recent reciprocal high-level visits.

Turkey's Trade With Iraq Increases: State Minister Kursad Tuzmen said on Saturday that Turkey's trade with Iraq could amount to 2.5 billion USD at the end of the year, weekend papers report. On Friday, Iraqi Trade Minister Abd al-Basit Karim Mawlud and Tuzmen met with businessmen from both countries. Tuzmen said that Turkey aimed to reach 10 billion USD of business with Iraq in trade, investment, transportation and contracting services within two years. He noted that Ankara wanted to sign a free trade agreement with Iraq. Tuzmen said that the Habur border gate with Iraq will be modernized, but added that a second and a third crossing should also be opened. He also pushed for the opening of a Turkey-Syria-Iraq railway line. Tuzmen urged Iraq to take effective security measures, especially on the road to Mosul, and to lower the fees taken from Turkish companies at the Halil Ibrahim customs gate.

Turkey to Increase Electricity Exports to Iraq: The Turkish power companies EUAS and Kartet will increase their electricity exports to Iraq to 1,200 MW before the end of this year, a Turkish official told papers on Friday. The official said during an official visit to Ankara by Iraqi Prime Minister Ibrahim Jafari that with 350 MW electricity sent to Iraq in late May, Turkey's exports to its neighbor would amount to 1,200 MW at the end of the year.

Baykal Joins Socialist International Summit in Jerusalem: Opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) leader Deniz Baykal arrived in Israel on Saturday to attend the May 22-24 meeting of the Socialist International (SI) in Jerusalem, weekend papers report. Baykal met on the margins of the

summit with Israeli Foreign Minister Silvan Shalom and Labor Party leader Shimon Peres. Women journalists accompanying Baykal and CHP lawmaker Petek Gurbuz came under verbal attack by a group of radicals for not covering their heads during Baykal's visit to the al-Aqsa Mosque, Monday papers report. On Monday, Baykal will move on to Ramallah to attend a welcoming reception hosted by Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.

Turkey May Pay 1 Billion USD to Displaced Kurds: Turkey could face fines amounting to 1 billion USD in compensation for local Kurds forced out of their villages amid fighting with the outlawed PKK in southeastern Turkey in the 1980s and 1990s, Monday's "Radikal" reports. 69,832 villagers have applied to a special commission set up by the Turkish government to investigate displacement cases. The commission has decided to pay compensation fees to only 342 applicants so far. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) advised the government that the July 2005 deadline for applications should be extended. If not, the MFA argued, the number of applications to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) will increase.

Turkish Army Planning Massive Operation Against PKK: The "Mesopotamian News Agency" (MNA), which is known to be close to the PKK, claimed on Saturday that the Turkish military is preparing to launch a large operation against Kurdish insurgents in rural areas of the southeastern provinces Sirnak, Siirt, and Hakkari in late May. Village guards in the area have been ordered to report to their locations by May 28 May, and a groups of informants from Diyarbakir, Midyat, and Van prisons have been sent to the region in advance of the operation, which is expected to last for two weeks. Meanwhile, jandarma teams are continuing operations against the PKK in rural areas of Cukurca of Hakkari province, weekend papers report. A lieutenant was killed when he stepped on a landmine during a mine-sweeping operation on Sunday.

EDITORIAL OPINION: Uzbekistan; US-Turkey

"Uzbekistan A Test for President Bush"
Yasemin Congar wrote in the mass appeal "Milliyet" (5/23): "President Bush has said that the US will no longer tolerate anti-democratic regimes in the name of stability. After his election victory in November, Bush has repeatedly highlighted this policy. This principle is going through a critical test in Uzbekistan. Although Bush has said many times that even if a despot presents himself as a friend of the US he cannot be tolerated, it remains to be seen if he is going to apply this policy to the Kerimov regime. The Uzbek dictator is certainly not the only one Washington's 'friends' with a bad record on democracy and freedom. There are others, ranging from the Saudi regime to the government of Hosni Mubarak in Egypt. In fact, such 'friends' are currently facing growing US pressure for reforms. . Washington has adopted a cautious approach in the face of the brutal repression in Andijon. But over the past week, Washington has stepped up its rhetoric against the Kerimov regime's brutality, and initiated a multi-faceted effort to push for an international investigation of the Uzbekistan events. . It seems that even though the Bush administration would like to keep its military options there, it has finally realized that pursuing a pro-Kerimov policy is not only dangerous but also works against US interests."

"Greece is the New Strategic Partner for the US"
Cuneyt Ulsever commented in the mass appeal "Hurriyet" (5/23): "There are reports that the US is searching for alternatives to replace the strategic partnership with Turkey. The US has military bases in the Middle East and in Central Asia. The establishment of additional bases in Romania, Bulgaria, and Azerbaijan is under consideration. Had Turkey rejected the use of Incirlik airbase as a cargo hub for US operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, the US was going to go for another option - the British Akrotiri base in Cyprus. In fact, US officials are increasingly speaking about Greece as a 'strategic partner.' Greek PM Karamanlis was given treatment appropriate to a strategic partner at the White House last week. The Turkish government's unpredictable policies have forced the US to find an alternative to Turkey. Prime Minister Erdogan has realized this at the last minute, and is making every effort to improve relations with the US. But the White House, unlike in past years, is not very enthusiastic about hosting Erdogan this time. The answer to Erdogan's appointment request came after a long delay, and the date given was later than what had been requested. Now, prior to the visit, the US is trying to give the message to Erdogan that the US is working on a 'plan B' in the Middle East, the Balkans, and Afghanistan. Let's hope our Prime Minister reads these messages correctly."